

Bible Study 8

Topic: **God Provides Food in Abundance - Part II**

Transitioning from the Sermon

A. The Main Points of the Sermon

1. God's abundant provision is an expression of God's amazing grace
2. Abundant grace in the wilderness (Psalm 136:16/Ex. 16:4) – emergency food
3. Abundant grace in Jesus Christ – (Ps. 136:23-25/John 6) spiritual food
4. God's abundant provision is an invitation to sincere gratitude
5. God's abundant provision is an opportunity for extravagant generosity

B. Conclusions of the Sermon

God, by God's nature, is loving, patient and generous to us. Let us to engage or increase our gratitude quotient. Can we turn thanksgiving into "thanks-living"? Ours is the challenge to always give thanks in all circumstances for all that God has so freely given unto us. We must seek to live with a constant awareness of the blessings that we have received and the ones we are anticipating; in all situations let us give thanks...for God's love endures forever. So, let us strive to be more generous. Instead of trying to keep and preserve for ourselves may we seek to give to others and pass on that which we have received. Let us cultivate grateful hearts that are full of gratitude and may we demonstrate a generous spirit as we give liberally, eagerly, freely and sacrificially to others. The God who has provided for us abundantly wants us to live thankfully and to share generously with those in need.

Scripture Readings

1 Timothy 4:4-5

⁴For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, provided it is received with thanksgiving; ⁵for it is sanctified by God's word and by prayer.

Psalm 136:25

who gives food to all flesh,
for his steadfast love endures forever.

Learning Objectives

The congregation will be able to:

1. List foods that are most environmentally friendly to grow
2. List foods whose production may have negative effects on the environment
3. Describe the benefits of adopting an active lifestyle
4. Develop an appreciation for our foods and an attitude of thanksgiving towards God.

Material Needed

1. PowerPoint Presentation
2. Laptop
3. Projector and Screen
4. Zoom account or other online platform such as Microsoft Teams if studies are conducted online

Introduction

God's creation was called "very good" by no lesser person than God. There is evidence of this all throughout nature. One such source of "good" which we often take for granted is the food market. It is astounding to realize the variety and quantity of food which is produced by our farmers and brought to the market for our consumption. Before you eagerly plunge into purchasing, next time you go to the market, take a moment to survey this 'city of food' and appreciate the wonder that it is.

In this lesson we will take a look at the classification and variety of vegetables and starches. In our look at classification, we hope to briefly examine the many types of foods and their contents. In variety we will look at the different occurrences of the same foods in our food systems. An important note is the fact that colour is an important derivative of variety. We will see for example that yellow foods are usually rich in some nutrients. Variety also refers to taste as foods in the same group may have differences in the amounts of various contents and hence have a different effect on our taste buds; sour, savoury, sweet (and sweeter!)

Exposition of the text

The letter of Paul to Timothy was written to provide advice for leadership in the church. One of the issues which Paul raised was the matter of false teachings. It appears that at that time, a complex system of false teaching had developed which among other things, commanded abstinence from food. This was based on the erroneous belief that the material world was evil. This however was in stark contrast to God's assessment of creation. In Genesis 1:31, God said the creation was "very good." This is a fact which Paul reiterates in the text and goes a step further by asserting that "nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;" the abundance of food is given for the abundance of life. The foods which God created come in the abundance of nature, an inestimable quantum of resources

intended for human flourishing. We do well to acknowledge the value of this provision, and unlike the false teachers in Timothy's day, we can examine, appreciate and appropriate this knowledge to our great benefit. In this lesson we will explore the many varieties of vegetables, starches and natural fats and oils which are provided for our consumption and well-being.

Application

VEGETABLES

There are several types of vegetables. Here is a list of the main classifications:

- Leafy green – lettuce, spinach and beet.
- Cruciferous – cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts and broccoli.
- Marrow – pumpkin, cucumber and zucchini.
- Root – potato, sweet potato and yam.
- Edible plant stem – celery and asparagus.
- Allium – onion, garlic and shallot.

Examine the list of non-starchy vegetables in the list at <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/starchy-vs-non-starchy-vegetables#nutrition>.

Selecting vegetables

To maximise nutrients and appeal, buy and serve different types of vegetables. Try to buy vegetables that are in season, and choose for freshness and quality. You should:

- Eat with the seasons – this is nature's way of making sure our bodies get a healthy mix of nutrients and plant chemicals
- Try something new – try new recipes and buy new vegetables as part of your weekly shopping
- Let colours guide you – get different combinations of nutrients by putting a 'rainbow' of colours (green, white, yellow–orange, blue–purple, red) on your plate.¹

Refer to the chart labelled **The Nutritional Value of Main Food Groups in Bible Study 6** for a reminder of the nutritional value of vegetables.

¹Adapted from <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/fruit-and-vegetables#selecting-fruits-and-vegetables>.

STARCHES

Types of starchy foods:

- Potatoes.
- Bread
- Cereal
- Rice and grains
- Pasta
- Roots and tubers
- Corn
- Beans

Starchy foods are our main source of carbohydrate and have an important role in a healthy diet. They are a good source of energy and the main source of a range of nutrients in our diet. In addition to starch, these foods contain fibre, calcium, iron and B vitamins. However, the negative side of Carbohydrates, especially in the processed forms, must be mentioned. Most of the supermarket shelves are filled with starchy food which are the cheapest and most filling, yet in overdose can be detrimental to our health.

FATS & OILS

Fatty acids can be grouped into four main types:

- Saturated
- Monounsaturated
- Polyunsaturated
- Trans fats

While fats and oils are important for many functions of the body, the generally accepted view is that trans fats are unacceptable for human consumption because of their relationship with the lowering of 'good' cholesterol and raising of 'bad' cholesterol. Sources of healthy fats/oils include:

- Avocados.
- Cheese.
- Dark Chocolate.
- Whole Eggs
- Fatty Fish
- Nuts

- Chia Seeds
- Extra Virgin Olive Oil.

What are good fats made of? The components of good fats include the Omega 3 and 6 fats.

Video

Foods whose production are environmentally friendly and those that are not. Benefits of physical activity for each age group

Activities

Activity 1

Planning a kitchen garden. In this session, persons will work in groups to consider the resources needed to plan a kitchen garden. What plants are likely to flourish? How much time will be needed? What type of crops can we grow? How long will they take? How will they be shared after growth?

PRACTICAL TIP: Churches may also consider creating a garden book (with various experiences of home growing) and a cook book using home-grown food from gardens like local vegetables, fruits and seasoning. This sharing may help persons at the beginning of the journey.

Activity 2

Click on this link and read about how the foods we eat impact our environment.

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/sustainability/plate-and-planet/>

Scroll down the page and complete a survey that helps you consider your Food print calculator.

Conclusion

There is a vast variety of naturally grown food that is good for human consumption. The nutritional value and health benefits of these foods are ideal. The advice of one expert is to consume at least two kinds of vegetables each day. It is now a well-established fact that consuming significant amounts of vegetables helps to protect against cancer, diabetes and heart disease. The opposite is that the processed food that is readily available to us is not as life-sustaining as they ought to be. We should exclude these in preference for the wholesome, natural, nutritious and indigenous foods which are abundantly available to us.

What other conclusions can you draw from this lesson?

Closing Prayer

Gracious God,

*We thank you for your abundant provision of healthy food and for the life-sustaining benefits which we receive from them. Help us to diligently develop lifestyle practices which will redound to our health and wellness. Help us to discern the value and importance of healthy eating and its relationship to healthy living and longevity of life. May we honour you in the ways we eat and care for our bodies, in the name of Jesus Christ we pray,
Amen.*